

APPENDIX 31—RFO NOXIOUS WEED PREVENTION PLAN

NOXIOUS WEED PREVENTION PRACTICES

Land Use Planning

Land use planning for noxious weed prevention involves—

- Working with Federal, county, and city planning staff and zoning committees to include consideration of noxious weed management when developing or approving plans, permits, or leases.
- Including noxious and invasive weed risk factors and prevention considerations in all environmental analyses for projects, permits, plans, and alternative development.

Surface Disturbance

Surface disturbance considerations for noxious weed prevention include the following policies—

- Minimize the amount of surface disturbance when possible to reduce the area for noxious and invasive weed establishment. Reestablish vegetation on all disturbed soil from construction, reconstruction, and maintenance activities, except road travelways.
- Reseeding should be accomplished during the first available window of opportunity.
- Require certified noxious weed-free seed or testing at a suitable laboratory before allowing the use of the seed for any reclamation or rehabilitation project.
- Require certified noxious weed-free straw or hay for use as mulch.
- Require power- or high-pressure cleaning of construction equipment prior to moving into relatively noxious weed-free areas and/or leaving known noxious weed-infested areas. This practice currently is used on multistate and multicounty projects.
- Inspect gravel pits and fill sources to insure the material comes from noxious weed-free sources.
- Monitor the construction site for noxious weed control needs until vegetation is reestablished.
- Retain reclamation bonds for noxious weed control until the site is returned to the desired vegetative condition.
- Remove noxious weed seed sources from adjacent sites or from the access route that may contaminate the construction site.

Vehicle Management

Vehicle management for noxious weed prevention includes the following policies—

- Survey roads for the presence of noxious weed sources before maintenance activities. Control noxious weeds if necessary before maintaining the roadway.

- Reseed disturbed areas that are not part of the road running surface or that are not needed for maintenance purposes.
- Retain desirable roadside vegetation to discourage noxious weeds.
- Remove noxious weed seed sources or control noxious weeds that could be picked up by passing vehicles on significant access routes.
- Require power- or high-pressure cleaning of off-road equipment before moving into relatively noxious weed-free areas.
- Ensure that noxious weed prevention and related resource protection is considered in travel management plans. Close or reduce the number of vehicle trails in noxious weed-infested areas to reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

Livestock Management

Livestock management for noxious weed prevention includes the following policies—

- Avoid trailing livestock through noxious weed infested areas. Where possible, trail on roadways where detection of noxious weeds is more likely to occur.
- Allow only certified noxious weed-free hay and grain (whole, rolled, steamed, or cubed) or pelletized feeds to be fed on federally managed lands. Emergency feeding may be exempted with written authorization from the Field Manager.
- Manage grazing allotments to prevent excessive soil disturbance at salt licks, watering sites, and other livestock concentration areas.
- Avoid grazing any reseeded sites until vegetation is well established.
- Livestock used in cultural management of noxious weeds should be held in a noxious weed-free environment for a period of time before and after moving the livestock into the noxious weed management area. This practice allows the animals to clean their digestive tract of noxious weed seeds.

Recreation Sites

Recreation site considerations for noxious weed prevention involve the following policies—

- Ensure that areas under recreation permit have onsite noxious weed control, and minimize the spread to other areas.
- Require that all pack and saddle stock use only certified noxious weed-free feeds and straw bedding.
- Sign trail heads and campgrounds for noxious weed awareness, noxious weed prevention, and noxious weed reporting techniques.

Fire and Fuels Management for Wildland Fires and Fuels/Vegetation Treatment

Fire and fuels management for wildland fires and fuels/vegetation treatment, in consideration of noxious weed prevention, includes the following policies—

- Require the cleaning of fire equipment following fire activities in noxious weed-infested areas. If possible, complete the cleaning before leaving the fire site.
- Consider noxious weed prevention measures in all fire rehabilitation plans by including the noxious weed coordinator on the rehabilitation team.
- Require certified noxious weed-free seed or testing at a suitable laboratory before allowing the use of the seed in fire rehabilitation projects.
- Emphasize “light hand” fire suppression tactics to minimize the amount of surface disturbance.
- Avoid staging equipment and resources in noxious weed areas.
- Avoid off-road travel in noxious weed-infested areas.
- A noxious weed control and monitoring plan, and a map of noxious weeds in the area, should be included as part of the environmental analysis before conducting any fuels/vegetation treatments.

Lands

Land considerations for noxious weed prevention include the following policies—

- Evaluate private lands being considered for Federal acquisition through purchase, exchange, or donation for the presence of noxious weeds.
- Include a requirement to control and manage noxious weeds on federally authorized actions.

Early Detection

Early detection for noxious weed prevention includes the following policies—

- Provide training to field personnel in the identification of noxious weed species known to occur in the area and in preventative measures they are expected to follow. Special attention should be given to equipment operators and fire personnel.
- Make noxious weed identification handbooks available to all field-going personnel.
- Make inventory and noxious weed occurrence information readily available to field personnel and personnel actively involved in planning and designing projects.
- Encourage field staff, land owners, and managers to recognize and document noxious weed populations.
- Develop education and awareness programs where visitors and users of the lands assist managers in locating and identifying new invader species.
- Conduct systematic and periodic inventories to detect new noxious and invasive weed infestations.

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